

*The Converted PRESBYTERIAN:*  
*OR*  
**The CHURCH**  
*OF*  
**ENGLAND**  
**JUSTIFIED:**  
*IN*  
**A SERIOUS DISCOURSE**  
*BETWEEN*  
**GEORGE a Devout English Protestant,**  
*And*  
**ANDREW a Zealous Scotch Presbyterian:**  
*TOUCHING*  
**Some Practices in the Church of ENGLAND.**

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THE CHURCH

OF ST. ANDREW

A SERIES OF DISCOURSES

ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

ANDREW A. ALEXANDER, D.D.

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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*A Serious Discourse between GEORGE,  
a Devout English PROTESTANT; and  
ANDREW, a Zealous Scotch PRES-  
BYTERIAN; Touching some Practices  
in the Church of England.*

*Andrew.* “



oming lately out of Scotland to see England,  
I am not well satisfied of the reason of some  
Rites and Ceremonies used in the Church of  
England; especially to see Men, when they  
enter into the Church, make a low reverence  
towards the Altar.

*George.* Sir, I do not much wonder  
that you are not well informed concerning that Ceremony; but I  
wonder rather, that one of your Perswasion should desire (as you seem)  
to be informed in any thing that likes not his humour.

*Andrew.* “Sir, I am not so rigid, but that in all things touching  
“my Duty towards God; I desire to be informed; and from my errors  
“to be converted; and when I am converted, to do (as Christ bid  
“Peter to do) that is; to strengthen my Brethren.

*George.* To inform you rightly then in this point, First, it must  
be supposed, that some place ought necessarily to be set apart for the  
publick Worship of God; and for Holy Duties; which is such a truth,  
and so consonant to reason, and the Practice of all God's People in the

Old and New Testament, that none but crazy brains will gainsay.

*Andrew.* "This I shall not deny, though some of my weak Brethren do.

*George.* Secondly, it will then follow, that all Christians who desire to walk in the ways of God, and in the steps of the Godly, are obliged to come unto such places set apart for God and Holy Duties; there to offer up Prayers and Praises to God, and solemnly and duly to Worship and Adore him; for to this very end are the Houses of God set apart from all common uses, that Gods People may there assemble themselves to Worship him together, and may by their joint Prayers Besiege Gods Throne, as with an Army, and take Heaven by force.

*Andrew.* "To this I shall easily agree, and I think none but the weakest of all my Brethren will deny the same.

*George.* Thirdly, it must be granted, that such Religious Publick Worship to be by all duly performed in Gods House, ought not to be performed lamely and by halves, as by the Soul only, without the Body; or the Body only, without the Soul; but it must be perfect and intire, as far as Mortals can attain to; it must be a Service made up of both Soul and Body; the whole Man must be engaged diligently therein: First, the Soul is obliged, that this Worship be internal, hearty and unfeigned; then the Body is engaged that it be a visible Worship exemplary to others, but very humble and lowly, expressing the inward reverence of the Soul, and augmenting and perfecting the same.

*Andrew.* "No man I believe will gainsay such a friendly and necessary compliance of the Soul and Body in performing Holy Duties, "if they once consider that God, the Creatour of all things, did frame "our Souls and Bodies for the Service of His Majesty, and for the "Honour and Glory of his Name; and if they expect or hope that "God shall at the last Day, glorify their Bodies as well as their Souls: "And for my part I shall not cavil at the manner of expressing our reverence to God, by uncovering our heads at the entrance into the "Church, and by bowing the Body; for I know well that bowing "is consonant to the Practice of all Gods Saints, both under the Law, "and under the Gospel even down to our times: But that which troubles me, and which me-thinks smells of Idolatry, or at least Judaism "or Popery, is the bowing and making reverence toward the Altar.

*George.* Indeed *Andrew* I was once almost of your mind, until

I had seriously considered, first, that such Adoration being a bodily act, must of necessity be done towards some part of the Church; either towards the upper end or towards the lower end, towards the sides, or roof, or pavement of the Church. Secondly, that if every man should be at liberty to bow which way his fancy or accident guided him, this would be a manifest violation of that Apostolical Precept; [*Let all things be done decently and in order*, 1 Cor. xiv. 40.] and that it would be most unbecoming a Christian Assembly, over which the God of Order and Unity doth preside, and on which an orderly Army of Angels continually do wait. Thirdly, that all the Holy Fathers of the Primitive Church (to whom God gave in a more plentiful manner, the Spirit of Wisdom and Piety) did with all the People committed to their charge, exhibit this bodily Worship of God towards one and the same place, and that was towards the East, and towards the Altar, which was alwaies placed in the East End of all Churches.

*Andrew.* "But why towards the Altar, rather than towards any other thing or place of the Church?"

*George.* First, it is enough to any man that loves not to be contentious, that all our Ancestors thought fit so to do, though we should not now know their reasons for the same.

Secondly, we know they had amongst other reasons this one; That the Altar, whereon Christs Body and Blood is solemnly Consecrated, and at which we eat the Bread of Life and drink the Cup of eternal Salvation; and the Sacrifices of Prayer and Praises were wont to be offered, was to be esteemed the best, the principal and most Holy part of all the Church Goods; which is asserted by all the ancient Fathers, and for this reason the Altar was used to be guarded with Rails, and to be placed in the highest part of the Church; whereas the *Baptisteryum* or Font was wont to be placed at first without the Church in the Church-yard: and afterwards within the Church, but towards the lower end and near the Entrance.

*Andrew.* "But this Worshipping towards the Altar seems in some sort a Worshipping the Altar, and so will be a kind of Idolatry."

*George.* I remember that the Primitive Christians were accused for Worshipping the Sun, because they were wont to Worship God with their faces towards the East; and those amongst you that in their Prayers lift their Eyes towards Heaven or the Roof of the Church, may with as much

much reason be said to Worship the Sky or the Roof of the Church; and those that entering into the Church bare-headed, may be accused for Worshiping the Walls; and those that in time of Publick Prayer stand Praying in their Seats with their hats before their Faces, may be said to Worship their Hats, although the only true God is Worship'd all the while, and nothing else.

*Andrew.* "But when this bowing toward the Altar is not commanded us, nor once mentioned in all your Church Service, or in the Rubrick; why should we do it, and make our selves guilty of Will-Worship?"

*George.* It is true, that neither bowing towards the Altar, nor standing up at *Glory be to the Father*, &c. nor to be bare-headed all the timewe are within the Church, nor many other things, are commanded us by any expresse Order of the Church, which yet are lawfully laudable and Piously performed by us, only by virtue of Catholique or Universal Custom, which is to be regarded alwaies as an implicit command of the Church, by all that will own themselves Sons of the Church: And therefore our Church thought it superfluous to command such things, as (being so usual and well known) none but meer cavillers would ever scruple to do.

*Andrew.* "Truly *George* you have given me better satisfaction herein than ever I had before, and I much wonder that your Pastors in *England*, do not take some pains to instruct rightly their People in this and some other points; if they did so do, then certainly there would not be so many Non-Conformists, nor such diversity and confusion in most Churches of *England*. But before we part, let me intreat you to satisfy me, if you can, in one thing more, which hath given much offence to me and my Brethren both in *Scotland* and *England*; and that is the word Altar, which you use for the Communion-Table, as if it were intended to introduce the Jewish Sacrifice, or at least the Popish Transubstantiation.

*George.* Good *Andrew*, you must know that all the ancient Fathers both of the Eastern and Western Christian Church, have ever very frequently so called the Communion-Table; so the Apostle of the Gentiles (*St. Paul*) saith expressly, *Heb. 13. 10. We have an Altar.* Now why may not we, nay, why ought not we to imitate herein (as in other things) the said Apostle of the Gentiles, and all the Holy Fathers of the Primitive Church, who lived after Judaism was extirpated, and before



before the Popish Transubstantiation was once dreamt of, especially so long as we use the word Altar in that Catholique and Universal sense, which they ever used the same? Let none then slander us for our way of Worship, but let all Men know, that we Worship not the Altar, but the only true God in a Regular, Uniform, Orderly way towards the Altar.

*Andrew.* "But good *George*, there is yet another bowing in the Church of *England* wherein I am not well satisfied, and have been told by some that it is little less than Idolatry, and that is Bowing at the Name of *Jesus*."

*George.* God forbid *Andrew*, that any Christian should count it Idolatry to Worship his Saviour, or to reverence his Name, by shewing some token of respect, so oft as we hear him solemnly mentioned: Especially in the solemn Assembly in his own House, whither we resort chiefly and principally to Worship him publickly, and to testify our homage that we bear unto him. I remember in *Spain*, where the people glory in their loyalty and obedience towards their King above other Nations, it is the custome, as oft as they make mention of their King, they uncover their Heads and add *Nuestro senior que Dios guarde muchos años*, Our Lord, whom God preserve many years: So Ambassadors at their solemn Audiences being covered, yet to shew the great reverence that they bear to the Kings whom they represent, they uncover their heads as oft as they make mention of them. How much more reason is it that we, who profess to be Christians, at our Solemn Audiences and Addresses should use some token of reverence and respect toward the King of Kings, our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, as oft as we hear him mentioned?

*Andrew.* "Certainly very much there is, and yet, I have read of an Ambassadour, or Nuntio from Pope *Paul* the fifth, to the State of *Venice*, who was observed at his Audience to make no difference between God and his Master in the mention of them, adding to each of them, *Nostro Signore*; only at the mention of his Master the Pope he always uncovered his head, but never at the mention of God."

*George.* Moreover, as there is no other name under Heaven whereby we must be saved but the name of *Jesus*, *Acts* 4. 12. So the great Apostle to the *Philippians* saith expressly, That at that name, every knee should bow, both of things in Heaven; things on Earth, and things under

*the Earth*; that is, according to the best Expositors, That Angels, Men and Devils shall reverence that Holy Name. Now, if any Man will be yet farther contentious, and perhaps cavil at the Exposition of this Scripture, Let such a one know (as the same Apostle said in the like case, 1 Cor. 11. 16.) That we have no such Custom to do otherwise, nor the Churches of God. Let him know, That to bow, or to be uncovered, or to express some other outward reverence at the Name of Jesus, is a Catholique, or Universal Custom amongst Christians, which ought to serve for a Law to all us of the Church of *England*, if there were no Cannon to injoyne the same; and they deserve not the name of Christians, who are so perverse and opinionated, as to refuse to comply with other Christians in such general laudable Customs, unless by express Law commanded.

*Andrew.* "I thank you for your pains and patience, but there is one thing more, which now comes in my mind, used by divers learned Divines in the *English* Church, wherein I, and many others are so much unsatisfied, that we are somewhat scandalized thereat; and that is to hear some Men in the Pulpit, instead of a Prayer before Sermon, to make only a kind of Exhortation to the People, to pray for such things as other men amongst us do actually pray for.

*George.* For that you must know *Andrew*, that in the Churches of *England* the Desk being intended for Prayer, the Pulpit was intended only for Exhortations or Preaching (as it is now very abusively called) and never for Prayer; and that this liberty taken by many private persons, to vent their private conceptions in Prayer before Sermon, and to make and use them as publique Prayers, is a meer innovation, introduced first into the *English* Church by the Puritan Faction long after the Reformation established, and to this day hath as little Authority as Reason for the same; nay, there is express Authority against it, for by the Act of Uniformity, *primo El.* it is upon grievous Penalty prohibited that in any Church any other open Prayer besides the Liturgy then established should be used by any Minister whatsoever.

*Andrew.* "But *George*, what means then your 55th Cannon set forth 1603. which seems to give leave to Preachers to pray their own conceptions before Sermon?

*George.* Indeed *Andrew* it hath so seemed to some, and it were to be wisht, that that Cannon by other words and other Title might  
better



betten declare the intention of the Makers thereof, who certainly did never intend, by that Canon, to cross and baffle either the forementioned Act for Uniformity, or the ancient Canons; which expressly forbid that any other Prayers should be used in Publick; but those that have been approved of by a Synod, *Nesorte aliquid contra Fidem, aut per ignorantiam, aut per minus Studium sit Compositum*; Least anything either through ignorance or negligence, should be done against the Faith; nor yet so notoriously and unreasonably to affront our Lyturgy, and the Compilers thereof, as if it were not a complete Form of it Self; or so good as every single Man can form: But it is manifest by the like former Injunctions of EDWARD the sixth, and HENRY the eighth, and the constant Practice of all the chief English Clergy, before and since the Publication of this Canon, that no such thing by that Canon was ever intended, but only to declare unto the People the matter of Prayer, and to inform them how and for what they ought chiefly to Pray, according to Christs Example (when he made the Mount his Pulpit, *Math. 6. 9.*) who taught his Auditors how they should Pray; but did not then Pray nor begin his Sermon with a Prayer; nor do we ever find that any such custom was ever used by the Apostles or Apostolical men, much less by every single Presbyter or raw Preacher, for how then should the Church obtain those ends for which Publick Lyturgies were at first, with so much wisdom and consideration, Composed, and after with so much strictness enjoyned? And indeed how ridiculous must it seem to any one that will but consider, that when a solemn Petition is with concurrent advice and mature deliberation of a whole Nation, or of any considerable number of People, drawn up and Presented to their King by one deputed from amongst them; that he, after he hath read the said Petition before the King, should presently presume in other words, of his own conceiving, make the same Petition to the King again, or at least to the same effect. (for no Minister is to Pray soberly and judiciously, will be found upon due Examination, to add any thing in his particular form, which is not for the main and in the general comprised in our Lyturgy.) And although many Orthodox men, not intending any evil thereby, nor foreseeing the dangerous events thereof, have in latter times taken up this fashion, yet they are greatly to be blamed and much to answer for their Non-conformity herein, for there cannot be the least reason that such a fashion should be introduced or retained in a Church where there is a Lyturgy so well

stored with Divine and Heavenly Collects fitted for all occasions necessary, unless it be to please and tickle the itching Ears of some People, by novelty and variety of conceptions, or to exercise and gratify the luxuriant and wanton fancies and licentious tongues of some Ministers, who aim more at ostentation and applause than edification, and take great delight in the vanity of reputation with the vulgar, that they are able to perform that work so dexterously and fluently, the sad event whereof hath been, that our most excellent Lyrurgy (Compiled by Godly wise men, confirmed by several Parliaments, approved by the most learned of all the Reformed Churches, and made use of constantly by the most Seraphick Souls, whose conversation is in Heaven and there lives unrepensible in all things) hath been by this novel usage brought into such disgrace and contempt as lately to be quite justified out, and since its Restauration to be so little esteemed, that unless men are before hand assured of a Sermon and Pulpit Prayers, very few will vouchsafe to come to Church.

*Andrew.* "Verily George, Thou hast almost (as King Agrippa said "to Paul) persuaded me to become a Protestant.

*George.* In good faith Andrew, I would to God (as Paul answered Agrippa) not only thou but all thy Brethren were not only almost, but altogether as I am.

*Andrew.* "I believe I could easily indure the English Lyrurgy, "but to hear alwaies the same thing is tedious, and me-thinks I am "more affected with those you call Pulpit-conceptions.

*George.* That is your own fault Andrew; The Jews you know were weary with Manna, and yet for the excellency thereof, the Psalmist calls it Angels Food; you should therefore sadly consider that such wantonness, such carnality, such corruption ought to be mortified within you, and not cherished and allowed: You should consider that you are not to go to Church as to a Comedy, to please flesh and blood, to please your selves but to please God, to Worship him and not to Worship your own imaginations; and should manifest whereby your submission to Authority, your self-denial, your humility and the resignation of your own Judgement, which are Duties of high account in the Gospel, and Sacrifices wherewith God is better pleased than with any novelty or elegance of expressions whatsoever.

*Andrew.* "Well George, touching the way of Worship used in "England, I have now no more to object; but touching the Discipline, "especially

"especially in the matter of Excommunication, I think I may say  
 " (with St. Paul in another case) *There is a party a fault amongst*  
*you.*

George. Not so fast Andrew, Condemn not before a hearing,  
 what is that so much offends?

Andrew. "I am informed that Excommunication, which ought to  
 "be esteemed by every good Christian a very high and grievous Pu-  
 "nishment, and ought to be inflicted but only for grievous and high  
 "Crimes, is ordinarily denounced for light and trivial offences in  
 "England.

George. You must understand (to inform you in a word) that the  
 punishments inflicted by the Spiritual or Ecclesiastical Court of England,  
 according to the Ecclesiastical Laws, proceed in this manner following.  
 First, The party delinquent is admonished; next goes forth *Minor Ex-*  
*communication*, whereby the delinquent is excluded from the Church;  
 or if not from the Church, yet from the Communion of the Lord's  
 Supper: And this commonly for some stubbornness or contempt shewn,  
 by not appearing in the Ecclesiastical Court upon summons; or not  
 obeying the Orders of the Court, which though in smallest matters yet  
 may be the greater crime; for *Res precepta, quo facilior est observari, ac*  
*precepti violatio est gravior, cum sit magis spontanea*, as St. Austin  
 observes of the first sin of Adam: Any command, by how much the  
 easier it is to be kept, by so much the more grievous is the breach thereof,  
 because it is the more Voluntary. Why then should the Church of Eng-  
 land be blamed for excommunicating any person that dares esteem its  
 Authority, let the crime be what it will? For *Contemptus in omni specie*  
*mandatorum* (as St. Bernard saith) *pari pondere gravis est, et communi-*  
*ter damnable quia convertit casum levis transgressionis in Crimen gra-*  
*vis Rebellionis*: Contempt in all kind of Injunctions, though the matter  
 be but a Trifle, is equally heinous, and alike damnable, because the  
 Contempt changes a light Trespas into a grievous Rebellion: And I  
 may add, because in Contempts it is not so much the violation of the Law,  
 as of the Authority, nor is the Decree undervalued so much, as the  
 Power. Add herein the Church of England proceedeth no otherwise  
 than the State of England; for so odious in the eye of the Common Law  
 of England is the contempt thereof that not only for Felonies (as was  
 antiently used) but even for an Action of the Case, an Action of a  
 small Debt, Account or Detinue; if a man will not appear; and submit  
 him-

himself to a Tryal at Law, a Process of Out-lawry is granted against him, and he being once Out-lawed, he is out of the protection of the Law; *Caput gerit Lupinum*; saith *Bracton*, he was lookt upon as a Wolfe Lawfully to be killed by any man that should meet him, as most just, that he who contemned the Law, and her in the King, should not have any benefit by the Law, nor protection from the King. And if there be any abuse in Excommunications and Out-lawries (as perhaps there is oft) the fault is not in the Government but Governours.

As for Excommunication, it may be said to be the greatest judgement on earth (how lightly soever men now esteem thereof) being that which is Ratified in Heaven (if we can believe our Saviour, *Math. 16. 19.*) And is as a precursory Judgement of Christ in the end of the World. It is a Judgement of the nature of Gods Judgement, takes hold of the least Sin of the impenitent, of the least Sin committed with contumacy, and punisheth him for it severely, as God did *Adam* but for tasting of an Apple, or such like fruit; and the man who gathered but a few bricks on the Sabbath day to make him a Fire, *Num. 15.* and yet passeth by sometimes the greatest Sin of the Penitent, the greatest Sin committed by infirmity, as God also did *David* when he committed (2 *Sam. 12.*) those foul Sins of Murder and Adultery.

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